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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: EFIN ETTC KNNP IR HK
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: DENIAL OF PORT ENTRY TO IRAN'S
UNINSURED FLEET

REF: SECSTATE 16220

¶1. (SBU) On February 26, Economic/Political Chief delivered reftel points to Hong Kong's Marine Department Director Roger Tupper. Tupper stated no Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Line (IRISL) or Hafiz Darya Shipping (HDS) vessels had entered Hong Kong waters in recent memory. In the event such vessels tried to enter Hong Kong, Tupper explained Marine Department's policy was to admit all vessels (under Port of Refuge principle) but reserve the right to detain non-seaworthy vessels. Such vessels would essentially be quarantined south of Hong Kong's Lamma Island away from port traffic. According to Tupper, the Marine Department conducts Port State Control (PSC) inspections on all visiting non-Hong Kong registered ships for international maritime convention compliance, including for insufficient liability insurance coverage.

¶2. (SBU) Director Tupper informed us that, although neither IRISL nor HDS operated in Hong Kong, at least two Iranian-based ship management companies had vessels registered in Hong Kong. To retain their Hong Kong-flag status, however, these vessels had to comply with Hong Kong's Shipping Ordinances and UN Sanctions Regulations/Ordinances. (Note: Hong Kong has implemented UN Security Council Resolutions 1737, 1747, and 1803 on Iran, and 1718 and 1847 on North Korea through local UN Sanctions Regulations/Ordinances. End Note).

MARUT